

According to Fred Gularte, who lived in Flat and Iditarod from 1910 until the early 1920's, there were also a number of "flop houses" where a bed could be rented for a stated number of hours, with meals obtained elsewhere.

Flat's last roadhouse proprietor was Henry Durant (Timothy Twitchell, pers. comm.). The town was abandoned in 1942 when the Federal Government shut down all gold mining at the beginning of World War II (Lyman 1972).

Because a large number of structures of various ages are still standing in Flat, an extensive program of recordation is required to document the existing situation. Archival sources and former residents could supply a great deal of information about the site. Archeological investigations may be necessary to evaluate subsurface features. Until such an extensive study can be made to determine stabilization and restoration needs, the site should be protected from disturbing activities.

Iditarod

IDT-014

The historic town of Iditarod is on an old channel of the Iditarod River seven miles northwest of Flat (Plate C-49). A large number of buildings still stand. Time only allowed for a superficial examination of the site.

Several of the structures on the east side of the river were examined in 1976. The buildings are in various states of disrepair, although most

are still fairly sound (Plates C-50 through C-56). All the buildings examined are of frame construction, and most have metal roofs. One building on the west side of the river is occupied and another building adjacent to it is used for storage (Plate C-57).

Many items of historic value are still contained in the buildings (Plates C-58 through C-63) and scattered around the town outside the buildings (Plates C-64 and C-65). An old steam-driven tractor is sitting within the town site (Plates C-66 and C-67). A steel and concrete bank vault still contains many records and receipts (Plate C-68). The cemetery, with markers and fences in various states of disrepair, is located north of town (Plates C-69 and C-70). Outlines of old foundations and similar features can be seen on low-level aerial photos of the town (Plate C-71).

Iditarod became the supply and commercial center of the Iditarod Gold District shortly after the town was founded in June 1910 (Orth 1967:443). By July, 1910 at least four roadhouses were in business: Iditarod Lodging House, Adolph Rippla, manager; McDonald's Roadhouse; Riverside Hotel, A. F. Morgan, proprietor; and Beattie House, George Adams, owner (Iditarod Pioneer July 10, 1910:4 and July 17, 1910:1). As many as 2,000 to 3,000 people came to Iditarod in that first year (Morrell 1968: 407).

The population of Iditarod diminished to 125 inhabitants by 1917 (Polk's Gazateer 1917-18:322). Polk's Gazateer (1917-18:1044-45) lists three roadhouses still active in Iditarod in 1917: Grand Hotel, Mrs. George

Mutchler, owner; Beattie House, George Adams, proprietor; and McDonald's Hotel, Manuel Gularte. Plate C-72 shows Iditarod's appearance during this time. Beattie House, which was operated by George Adams until 1920, was the last functioning roadhouse in the community (Tony Gularte, pers. comm.).

By 1921, Iditarod had become a ghost town. Most of the people who remained in the area moved to Flat to be closer to the placer mining operations. The Iditarod tramway, a wagon road, and a winter sled road connected the two towns by 1921 (Rivers 1975:211), facilitating the transport of supplies from the river terminus at Iditarod.

Iditarod is a fine example of an Alaskan mining town, and could be easily preserved as an historic site. Some of the buildings are in need of minor repair and others could be stabilized as ruins. The large variety of historic artifacts at the site should be preserved. In spite of the relatively remote location of the town, bottle collectors and scavengers have already begun to remove historic artifacts and are causing damage to some of the structures. Since the townsite of Iditarod has been tentatively approved for transfer to the State, the State of Alaska has primary responsibility for any further work at the site, and any effort they make should be fully supported. Iditarod would undoubtedly qualify for the National Register of Historic Places.